

**Security Council**

Distr.: General
22 March 2001

Original: English

Letter dated 20 March 2001 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have seen a copy of the note verbale of 16 March 2001 from the Permanent Mission of Zimbabwe to the President of the Security Council (S/2001/238). It suggests that authorities in the United Kingdom have obstructed the shipping of equipment to Zimbabwean police contingents deployed in the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

I raised this matter immediately with my authorities in London. They in turn spoke to our High Commission in Harare. This was the first that either had heard of the matter. Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials in London then spoke to British Airways — which is of course a private company, totally independent of Government. British Airways acknowledged that their staff in Harare had received oral enquiries from the Zimbabwean authorities about the possibility of shipping arms and munitions to Skopje. British Airways replied that they did not think that they would be able to carry such equipment because of the United Kingdom embargo on arms exports to Zimbabwe and because of concerns over transporting the equipment across London (from one airport to another). At the same time they provided the Zimbabwe authorities with advice on alternative carriers (of which there are several).

In fact, it seems very unlikely that the United Kingdom arms embargo, which applies to exports to Zimbabwe, would have applied in this case. The difficulty over transporting the equipment across London was raised orally by the Zimbabwean Ministry of Foreign Affairs with our High Commission in Harare in December 2000. After consulting British Airways, our Acting High Commissioner informed the Ministry that this appeared to be a minor, practical problem. He suggested that, if the organization wishing to transport the equipment (the Zimbabwe police) were to get in touch, the High Commission would be ready to help find a solution. However, there was no subsequent contact by the Ministry or the police.

My authorities remain very open to discussing this matter directly with the Zimbabwean authorities. It goes without saying that we would in no way wish to obstruct Zimbabwean participation in the United Nations Mission in Kosovo.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a Security Council document.

(Signed) **Jeremy Greenstock**
Permanent Representative

